

## **VASIP Steering Committee Meeting Notes**

### **October 25, 2007**

**Members Attending in Person:** Anne Benner, Mark Blackwell, Christy Cacciapaglia, Janet Davis, Sharon Ekleberry, Sterling Deal, Malcolm King, Martha Kurgans, Jason Lowe, Carolann Pacer-Ramsey, John Roberts, Rhonda Thissen

**Members Participating by Phone:** Caroline Schleifer

#### **Update on Project Activities:**

- Transformation Conference: Sterling and Rhonda updated the Committee on the events and outcomes at the Transformation Conference, which was held September 10-12 in Richmond. Approximately 330 participants attended from across the service spectrum, including a few individuals from other states. Participants' evaluation forms are currently being analyzed. Of note, the final activity of the conference on September 12 was a series of regional breakout sessions in which attendees from the various planning regions in the state broke into groups to discuss regional issues affecting transformation activities. As of October 25, two regions, Regions 4 and 5, had already planned follow-up meetings.
- Minkoff and Cline Visit: Sterling and Rhonda updated the Committee on Drs. Minkoff and Cline's September 10-13 technical assistance visit, which coincided with the conference. At the conference, they provided a day-long workshop on developing welcoming systems of care for consumers with co-occurring disorders. Other consultation activities of note during this visit included Dr. Minkoff's kick-off meeting with the state hospitals' System Recovery Workgroup, to which he will provide consultation around improving recovery-oriented care and services to consumers with co-occurring disorders in the state hospitals, and a regional "Change Agent" kick-off meeting in Region 2. Sharon Ekleberry updated the Committee on the Change Agent kick-off, which was held in Fairfax on September 13. She stated one of the challenges to the Change Agent process is understanding how the Change Agents can work well together within the management structure in a particular organization. At Fairfax-Falls Church CSB, for example, the combination of COMPASS survey results, Change Agents' feedback, and other sources will come together to assist the CSB to develop a Agency Action Plan for dual diagnosis capability.
- Workforce Survey: Jason Lowe updated the Committee on the VASIP Workforce Survey. He stated that a memorandum from the Commissioner announcing the survey should be rolling out to the CSB executive and clinical directors by next week. The Commissioner has signed off on the memo, and the final changes are being made to the Department's VASIP Web site, which is the portal through which participants will access the survey.

#### **Strategic Planning for Future Committee Activities:**

- Steering Committee Purpose, Structure and Membership: The Committee further discussed the possibility of this group becoming a replacement for the VACSB's Co-Occurring Work

Group that was disbanded after DMHMRSAS was awarded the COSIG grant. (This would require that the membership of the VACSB vote to give the Committee status, an idea which Committee member Will Williams, who is also chair of the VACSB's Substance Abuse Council, is promoting within the VACSB.) Martha Kurgans expressed reservations about this due to the lack of CSB representation currently on the Committee; Martha also wondered why the MH and SA councils shouldn't be folding co-occurring disorders intricately into their own activities, instead of parsing that out into a different group. Mark Blackwell responded that the SA population sometimes gets lost in the discussions and believes that folding in co-occurring disorders to the SA Council's work would exacerbate that problem. Martha stated that there are not very many substance users who do not have a co-occurring disorders, and therefore that discussion needs to be part of both Councils' activities, not separated into another group. Rhonda stated that this Committee could work as a VASCB committee if we are able to obtain more CSB representation among the membership; legitimizing the Committee as part of the VACSB's Council/Work Group structure would help with that.

The Committee also discussed broader issues including the inability of certain CSBs/regions to implement changes as they have in Region 2 (i.e., the Change Agent process), overall challenges with the transformation process, the relationship between CO and CSBs, i.e. performance contracts, and other issues affecting VASIP/COSIG implementation across the state.

- Committee Tasks and Work Plan: Due to the low turn-out at the meeting, this agenda item was tabled.
- Committee Oversight Of/Participation In VASIP Activities In Grant Years 4/5: Sterling and Rhonda initiated a discussion about planned activities in the coming two grant years in which the Committee might want to get involved. These include statewide development of Double Trouble In Recovery groups (a 12-step program for consumers with co-occurring disorders) and evaluation activities currently in the planning process. With respect to Double Trouble In Recovery (DTR), the VASIP team is in discussions with Howie Vogel, executive director of DTR, about developing a consultation contract for 2008 which would bring Howie to Virginia to train consumers and providers to set up DTR groups. Several Committee members expressed interest in having a conference call with Howie to discuss how he might assist consumers, state facilities and CSBs to establish DTR groups. Rhonda agreed to set up the meeting with Howie, and Mark Blackwell, Ann Benner, John Roberts, Caroline Schleifer, Christy Cacciapaglia and Sharon Ekleberry indicated they would like to participate in the call. d how he works with small groups of peer participants to develop DT groups in different states.

The Steering Committee's next meeting is set for Tuesday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 at Conference Room C at Henrico Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services, located at 10299 Woodman Road in Glen Allen.